

THE REVIEW AT LONGCHAMPS.

(Condensed from the N.Y. Herald.)

All troops except the garrison of Paris, had bivouacked for the night on the Bois de Bologne. The troops on the ground consisted of 70,000 men, the four corps d'armée comprising the garrison of Paris and the army of Versailles. The troops were formed on the Longchamps Race Course, the line of army corps facing the Seine and occupying nearly the whole of the open space of the race course. Of the parade, when it had been finally set, the central object opposite the tribune was the brilliant group of the general staff, headed by General L'Admirault, chief of the army of Versailles and governor of Paris, with the chief of his staff and a great posse of aide de camp. The formation of the battalions on parade was in columns of companies, the saving of frontage being an object. In the rear of the army corps, thus arranged was formed in mass of batteries twenty six batteries of artillery comprising the reserve, and being in addition to the divisional artillery, which was formed up in its proper position, with the respective army corps. The whole of the cavalry, consisting of fifty three squadrons in all, was formed upon the plain of Bagatelle, some distance to the right, and separated from the rest of the parade by the ornamental wood around the cascade. The advent of the Shah, as accompanied by Marshal MacMahon and followed by a very large and brilliant cohort of mounted staff officers, he rode on to the field, was greeted from the drums and bugles with the *bat aux champs*, the traditional salute of a French army on parade. MacMahon rode a noble chestnut charger with that dashing grace of horsemanship which is one of the chief causes of his popularity in the army. The Shah came on his left, a little behind, mounted on his white Arab stallion with the famous mauve tail. On the Shah's left rode L'Admirault, almost as fat as, but being without the phlegm of Bazaine, while on the right hand of MacMahon was the Duke d'Aumale. The Shah rode to the back of the pavilion, and dismounting, took his seat in the chair under the canopy, whence, in the company of M. Buffet, he witnessed the scene and march past. MacMahon, with L'Admirault, the Duke d'Aumale, the mounted Persians, with the exception of the Shah, and the rest of the horsemen, wheeled to one side and took up a position opposite to, and facing the pavilion, leaving an interval between, along which the troops marched past. The infantry marched past in columns of double companies, each double company being about 750 strong. Each regiment consisted of three battalions, which, including the regiment of chasseurs, made up the 39 battalions, which is the compliment of an army corps. The chasseurs, as a rule, marched better than any other infantry of the line and wore a smarter and more soldierly aspect in their dark blue uniform. The red breeches had still a good many of the faults that characterizes the French army under the Empire. In the rear ranks there were some very little men. The dressing was imperfect; the step was often badly kept; many men slouched rather than marched; there was a deficiency of martial carriage, and there was a great lack of uniformity in the angle of slope of the rifles. But, while all this is true, none the less true is it that there were apparent the results of aspirations after better things, and efforts to overcome that looseness of formation which long practice has made second nature.

It used to be boasted that the French army

consistently condemned all attempts at rigidity of formation. Dressing was ostentatiously disregarded. Men were absolutely encouraged to disregard the "touch" and the maintenance of the step. "We are supple, mobile, agile," was the boast. "We have outgrown your stiff, formal drillings; your prancing of the goose step, your antiquated notion that an army is a machine. We march to get over the ground, not to resemble a moving wall. Let the bugle sound, and see how dexterously we should scatter into skirmishing order; with what ease we should spring forward in the charge. All your stiff formalities are for ignorant clowns, without military instincts. We are intuitively soldiers, and dispense with trouble of which we do not see the use." The Germans knew better. Their rank and file is the most intelligent and best educated in Europe, owing to the manner in which their army is recruited; and they, of all nations, might have seen their way to dispense with formal drills and exact formations, if it were safely possible that such could be dispensed with. But they knew such was not the case. Cohesion, morale, mutual reliance, impunity from panic are the outcome solely of discipline—of what the Prussians call "*appel*." Every battle field is a melee. True, but the difference between the necessary disorder of a well-drilled and an ill drilled force is that there is order in the disorder of the former—that when the licker and clash of the melee is over, the parts of the machine fall each into their places again—that men's faculties as well as their bodies, are disciplined; while of the disorder it is irreparable. If victory crowns the effort, all is well; if the resistance is stubborn and sustained the disorder becomes chaotic, morale unbased on the consciousness of cohesion gives way and defeat follows. The history of the late war iterates and reiterates the lesson that against the rock of close discipline the waves of loose bravery break and are scattered. While the Third German Army Corps, after struggling fragmentary through the fire hell of the wood of Spicheren, could nevertheless by reason of its trained discipline, stagger into formation when that terrible ordeal had been battled through, Frossards troops once driven off the dead angle of the Spicheren Berg, never could recover, but huddled, a shapeless throng of fugitives, off to distant Puttelange, flinging their arms from them as they ran. Instance on instance might be multiplied.

It is obvious that the French military authorities are changing rudimentally the system of the army. The work is a vast one. The bad traditions of generations are to be unlearned, and then lessons are to be unlearned such as the foe has enframed in his constitution as the result of the good traditions of generations. But it is much for proud Frenchmen to have realized the truth of the axiom *Fecit ecce ab hoste*, and to be acting on the realization. The dressing on Thursday was not good, but hard efforts were obviously being made to get and keep it. Officers were to be heard calling to their men to pick it up. Men were to be seen painfully sedulous in "keeping touch," of their neighbors; numbers were out of step, but numbers were seen changing step, that they might get back into the right step. Intervals were carefully regarded. The men individually were better "set up" than they used to be, if "suppling motions" were being extensively resorted to. Knapsacks were neatly rolled and the great-coats trimly rolled about them. The kepi had been done away with, and a rather showy shako substituted.

The shoe and gaiter, however, still remain, and while they are retained the sustained marching power of the French army is much impaired. The bands are too strong in proportion to the company of soldiers, an old fault in the French army, and calculated to weaken the force of fighting men in the day of need. Some of the brigades marched much better than others; the result, as I take it, of greater care and perception of this situation on the part of the generals commanding. The artillery, both divisional and reserve, passed the saluting point with remarkable excellence of dressing. The guns were rather miscellaneous and there was an absolute want of horse artillery, but the progress from hardly any field artillery, at all, which was the case at the end of the war, to the present condition is simply wonderful. The cavalry, as, perhaps the weakest point. Frenchmen are bad riders and worse keepers, and they do not seem to have improved materially since the war. Both of the artillery and cavalry, the accoutrements were in most discreditable state of dirt.

On the whole, it seems to me that the omen may be drawn, from the aspect of the troops on Thursday's parade, that there is forked lightning in the thunder cloud of France's hatred to Germany and her thirst for revenge. The French mean to have another wrestle for the fall—that every one who knows the nation knows. But every one did not know what I think this review goes to show, that her military authorities are working assiduously for the end that when the combatants shall grapple, as grapple they must, the issue will not be, by a long way so nearly a foregone conclusion as most people have been content to assume it. If France can contain herself, and meanwhile work as she has worked during the past two years the struggle will be a Titanic one. She has still an immensity to do; indeed, she has scarcely yet begun the work she has set herself. But in ten years time, in accordance with the dispositions of her new military laws, she will be able to set in line over 800,000 men without calling out the reserves. With them her military strength will number 1,300,000 trained soldiers. The second act, just passed, providing for organization as the first does for recruiting, enacts that wholesome decentralization, the lack of which contributed as much as anything to France's downfall in the late war. With eighteen well organized and equipped army corps, each with its own staff and its own province to recruit from, with a powerful artillery and arms of precision second to none in the world, and with a strength in fighting men of a million and a quarter, who shall say that France shall not have made good her title to re-enter the ranks of the great military Powers? And all this that I write of has deliberately set herself to accomplish within ten years.

Mr. R. B. Forbes, in a letter which appears elsewhere, calls attention to the special risks attending navigation along the coast of Nova Scotia, and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, because of the unusual disturbance to which the compass in iron vessels is subjected in that vicinity. What our correspondent says as to the cause of this disturbance gives additional interest to an article on the same general subject which we find in the current number (July), of that able periodical, *Naval Science*. The earth, as the writer in *Naval Science* argues, is a permanent magnet which, amongst other influences, induces magnetism in all ferrous bodies. Consequently "elongated